



ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS

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NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORLEANS PUBLIC DEFENDERS OFFICE WINS HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

**Calling the Orleans Public Defenders Office an "Inspiration,"
The Southern Center for Human Rights Honors the Orleans Public Defenders Office with
the 2009 Frederick Douglass Human Rights Award**

NEW ORLEANS – On October 22, 2009, the Orleans Public Defenders Office (OPD) will follow in the footsteps of such human rights leaders as Representative John Lewis of Georgia and Reverend Joseph Lowery when the office receives the Southern Center for Human Rights Frederick Douglass Human Rights Award. The award is given in recognition of OPD's "outstanding contributions to the protection of human rights in the criminal justice system," according to Lisa Kung, Director of the Southern Center for Human Rights. Ms. Kung called OPD "an inspiration to the many public defender offices that are struggling to do right by their clients in the face of tremendous pressures to do otherwise."

"We feel extremely honored and humbled to be recipients of this award," said Derwyn Bunton, Chief Public Defender for Orleans Parish. "This award is a privilege, and as OPD continues to fight for funding and strive for excellence, I hope the office continues to be thought of as worthy of such an honor for years to come," Bunton said.

The award will be formally given to OPD at the Southern Center for Human Rights annual Frederick Douglass Awards Dinner on October 22, 2009 in Washington, D.C.

The office of the Orleans Public Defenders is an independent legal office and political subdivision responsible for providing legal representation to indigent individuals charged with criminal offenses in Orleans Parish. OPD's office houses a full-time staff of public defenders, investigators and administrative personnel as well as a corps of dedicated volunteers, interns, and law clerks.

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